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August #3 (Vol II)

VANTAGE™

Information for the Serious Comic Book Investor

MARVEL COMICS: THE NEXT HOT COMIC COMPANY?

(WHAT??? MARVEL? YES!!! MARVEL!)

- **THE BIG TUROK SCARE!**
- **INSIDE INFO: WHAT NEXT FOR THE X-MEN?**
- **STAR TREK AND STAR WARS: GOING UP?**
- **HARBINGER CHANGES FOREVER! FIND OUT HOW!**

THE INSIDE STORY:

MARVEL PLANS 'TIL 1994

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DAREDEVIL # 314: A VANTAGE PICK!

WIN ABSOLUTELY NOTHING!

It's easy to win the VANTAGE GIANT NOTHING TIPMEISTER AWARD! We PROMISE YOU that the VANTAGE GIANT NOTHING will be the COOLEST NOTHING that you will ever see (or not see)! Those of you lucky enough to win NOTHING must promise to keep our secret — don't tell your friends how cool it is.

Here's how to win: Just send us an investing tip or reading pick. Your tip can be a hidden fact in comics, or even just your opinions on the investment market based on what you've seen at shows and in stores. Send us a copy of your own homemade reference tool, like an Image Index, or a Valiant character guide. Anything about comics can help us! Be sure to tell us where you got any info from (a photocopy is best, but not necessary)! If we haven't already thought of it (aww, what the heck, maybe even if we have already thought of it), we'll print your name, city, and state (plus a quote from you — say something cool)! Tell us what you did to help promote Vantage, like by telling your local store-owner about how awesome we are, and double your chances to win! If you win, you will be an official VANTAGE TIPMEISTER! Then we'll mail your GIANT NOTHING straight to you (hope your home is big enough)!

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West Allis, WI 53227

Or call us at...

414-545-3646

CONGRATULATIONS TIPMEISTERS!

"I just got my first copy of your guide - I love it!! It's hard to believe that so much info can be packed into such a small place. I can't wait for #2!"
- **Michelle Mercardo**, Cleburne, Texas
(Glad to be of service, Michelle! Just wait 'till you see Vantage #0 in a couple months!)

"I'd like to say that your tips helped me get everything I needed before they went up! Thanks a lot!"
- **E.J. Dadia**, Silverdale, Washington
(Your welcome, EJ!)

" I Want - No NEED A Vanatage Giant Nothing!! Please OH Please Give me one!!! . . . Thanks for making a COLLECTOR'S magazine!"
- **Dan Albas**, Penticton BC, Canada
(How could we say no?)

Plus: John David Spears ;
Larry A. Frederick; Jeff Hartwick

Publisher, Rob Golub. Editor, Tracy Willems. Admin Assist, John Green. Art Director, Steve Reid. Special thanks to our advisors.
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WHAT WE'RE ALL ABOUT

Well, response to **Vantage** #1 has been pouring in and we're glad to hear that you liked it! You told us how much you liked the giant nothing program, so we're keeping it. You said you love the fact that **Vantage** provides inside tips and info that you can't get in the flashy mags, so we're working hard to keep bringing you those! We're also working on new ways to get Vantage to your local store even earlier, to make the info that we bring you even more valuable! You also told us that the $100 list was confusing, so we've replaced it with what you see below.

Our goal is not to be another **Wizard**™ (we'll leave that to **Hero Illustrated**™). We seek to provide the important information that the Hollywood-style magazines all seem to overlook. We have nothing against the big mags — we think they're great. They sell a lot more copies than us and that's fine. We don't want to sell too many copies because we want our information to be exclusive. In fact, we'd like to make a special request related to this topic right now — please, don't tell anyone what you've learned in **Vantage**. If they want to know, let them spend the same money that you had to. This is not just another mag. This is an informational newsletter, and if you give the information away, that's as good as giving it all away.

If you want to be entertained, flip through a flashy mag. When you're done, if you want to be informed, pick up Vantage. For the collector who chooses to speculate, every sentence that we write is worth a hundred pages of flashy hype. We don't accept publishers' ads so we don't owe any favors to the big comic companies. We are unbiased investigators who tell it like it is! That's what we're all about.

Top Picks of the Month

- Comics' Greatest World
- Star Trek: Deep Space Nine #1
- The Second Life of Dr. Mirage #1

More Vantage Investment Picks

- Daredevil #314 (back issue), Daredevil: Man Without Fear #1
- Nova #1 (First series)
- Uncanny X-Men & X-Men (recent back issues and current issues)
- Protectors #1, Ex-Mutants #1, Dinosaurs For Hire #1 (B&W)
- Plasm #1, Dark Dominion Trading Cards and Album
- Dark Horse Comics #7-9 (Star Wars back issues)

"The above pick list is a guide based on research, advisors' opinions, and staff opinions - keep in mind that even the experts will disagree. "Hot" comics can lose value after months or years. You would be wise to trade or sell books before they lose value. Read over the facts and opinions in Vantage, examine the pick list, and then make your own investment decisions. Remember: 1) There's no sure thing. Never bet the farm on any one book. 2) Comics may be fun to invest in, but they're even more fun to read! Open up one of those sealed polybags and give comics a try!"

- Publisher Rob Golub

THE TUROK SCARE

First, the big return of Superman came out. Some retailers (not all, just a few) had over-estimated customer interest, ordering too many copies. Fearful of getting stuck with extra copies, many dealers offered them at discount prices, or as parts of sets. Then an estimated 1.6 million copies of **Turok** #1 came out. It was supposed to have a fully metalized cover. Though it didn't, sales were good, but not good enough for the market to quickly absorb 1.6 million copies.

Of course, the last thing that Valiant needed was to flood the market. So Valiant took action. They invented a "**Turok** #1 Exchange Program". For every thirty-five copies of **Turok** #1 that were returned to Valiant by a store-owner, Valiant **promised to give away a free Gold Logo Edition of Turok** #1. In other words, if you were stuck with too many **Turok** #1's, you were able to unload them and get something more rare (you could only do this if you owned a store).

The plan was a good one because it got a lot of **Turoks** off the street which will allow them to acquire some rarity. Vantage believes that with many **Turok** #1's now turned in, the market will continue to absorb additional copies, and **Turok** #1 will gain value. Although we did not originally push it since the "**Turok** Scare" is exactly what we feared would happen, **Turok** #1 should still gain some value over time thanks to Valiant's quick thinking. Dealers who are looking to unload it at shows at a deep discount may be making a mistake which you should seriously consider taking advantage of.

In any case, this whole situation did more than just make the market for **Turoks** really weird. It also scared some dealers. Vantage believes that most dealers are intelligent, cautious businesspeople. That's why some of them turned in their May advance-order forms (as many of them had extra **Turoks** sitting on the shelves) with lower quantities on "big books" than they otherwise would have. As a result, the following super-hyped books will most likely be underordered (remember, the last time we told you something would be underordered it was **Batman** #497, which took off.): **Uncanny X-Men** #304; **The Second Life of Doctor Mirage** #1 (A Top Pick of the Month — see Valiant article). **Deathmate** (**all four colors**, but note that **Deathmate Yellow** has both Ivar and Ninjak! These two will each be getting their own series).

Turok LogoTM & © 1993 Voyager Communications, Inc.

"Turok #1 should still gain some value over time thanks to Valiant's quick thinking."

MARVEL:

THE NEXT HOT COMIC COMPANY?

Advisors are reporting a growing interest in Marvel books! This is in part due to the **Marvel X-Men cartoon on Fox.** This is also due to the fact that consumers are put off by the tremendous number of new universes. One advisor told us, "they're returning to their meat and potatoes." There's no way of knowing how far the trend will go, but Marvel has **impressive marketing plans** for the next six months that could bring at least some heat back to this former scorcher of a company.

NOVA: Way, way back in the old days when **Vantage** was just a little mail-order newsletter, in one of our first issues, we told you that the **Nova** series was not forever gone. Yep. He's baaaaack!

Marvel now has **Nova** officially scheduled for October. Marvel is also planning a huge push for **Nova.** He'll be appearing on the cover of **Advance Comics** #58.

From the investor's perspective, **Nova #1 (the first series) is the place to be. Nova** #1, the origin and first appearance, is cheap. In fact, you may be able to find it in some dealers' bargain boxes. When the new **Nova** series hits, the old **Nova** #1 (which has a low print run) should go up. It's a nice sleeper pick.

X-MEN: Marvel is getting down to serious business with the **X-Men.** They've got a heavy promotional campaign behind their current "hunt for Magneto" storyline. When Magneto is found he won't be Mr. Nice Guy anymore. Magneto will be sick of his benevolent attitude towards those yucky, inferior homo sapiens. Gotta hate those homo sapiens. In part, he'll be motivated by a terrible AIDS-style virus that strikes mutants only (one "major" character dies of the virus in #304). Magneto will be horrified by the fact that homo sapiens feel little sorrow over the tragedy. When Magneto decides to turn against homo sapiens **some X-Men decide to join him,** and this leads into a giant battle. **X-Men will choose sides to battle one another,** as part of a giant Avengers/X-Men crossover. Marvel intends to wrap the whole storyline up in December.

*"When Magneto decides to turn against homo sapiens **some X-Men decide to join him,** and this leads into a giant battle."*

As a subplot, Wolverine will confront Magneto in battle in **Wolverine** #75 in which Wolverine will be devastated. In fact, Wolverine will lose some or all of his powers. Our inside source at Marvel tells us that "he may have to be replaced with a character who is now a villain." (Sabertooth?)

This truly sounds like an exciting storyline. Of course, Marvel is out of style these days among speculators. The good news is that this keeps **Uncanny X-Men** print runs at about only half the level of **Spawn.**

MARVEL

At the shows the **Uncanny X-Men** back issues are still consistent sellers, and the top-rated **X-Men** Saturday morning cartoon on Fox is only adding fuel to the fire (Over four million people watch the **X-Men** every Saturday morning!). X-back issues still gain value, even if they're not as hot as they once were. Readers who jump on board during the battle between X-Men this Fall will want to know what events led to the battle.

Thus, **Vantage** expects interest in recent X-back issues (including those coming out now) to gain some value. You may want to try picking them up cheaply or in trade at the shows. In short, recent **Uncanny X-Men** and **X-Men** comics have some real investment potential. Someday dealers who were too busy ordering Valiant and Image books will probably be willing to trade you something nice for the X-books that they should have ordered but didn't.

SPIDER-NEWS: **Spider-Man** is similar to **X-Men** in that it depends largely on the following of the people who enjoy reading it. Without the older investors, recent issues of **Spider-Man** rarely reach super-high prices any more. Still, **Spider-Man** back issues can gain value, and they do sell well at the shows. An inside Marvel source tells us that **Amazing Spider-Man** #382 kicks off a major storyline involving Mary Jane. She will have had it with the whole **Spider-thing** and their relationship will take a dive.

DAREDEVIL: Frank Miller writes the upcoming **Daredevil: Man Without Fear** limited series on Daredevil's early years (it will also include some Elektra material). Miller is one of the best. Period. We can probably expect to see a renewed interest in both the old Miller **Daredevil** back issues and the current issues. Also, Marvel will be kicking off a major storyline in the regular series involving the Kingpin. One Marvel source told us that "an old flame" will be returning to Daredevil's life. Our guess is that it's Elektra. Sources indicate that the recent back issue **Daredevil** #314 (with a guest appearance of Elektra, dreamed) <u>will play a very important role in the new storyline.</u>

Look for price gains on #314, #158 (1st Miller), and #168 (1st Elektra).

PLUS: **Generation X,** not to be confused with Image's **Gen-X,** will be a new Mutant book from Marvel. Banshee will be the leader of this new school for new mutants. The book will be writen by Scott Lobdell. A **Gambit** limited series is now in production. It will be writen by Howard Mackie. **Avengers** #367, due out this month, will tie into the upcoming BIG Avengers/X-Men crossover where X-Man battles X-Man!

MARVEL COMICS Logo and related characters TM & © 1993 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc.

USE THE FORCE, VANTAGE!

Vantage uses the Force for all of our picks, so it only makes sense that we now make the Force an investment pick. Fact: Star Trek and Star Wars collectibles gain value over time. Most collectibles gain value because the subject is hot today. For example, **Solar** #1 gains value because everyone is excited about Valiant right now. Milk bottle caps can go up if people are into them today. However, if interest Valiant disappears, so does the value of **Solar,** and if bottle caps go out of style so does your entire bottle cap collection.

Dark Horse's recent **Star Wars: Dark Empire** mini-series has done very well in the back-issue market. Published only a couple years ago with a mere $2.95 cover price, #1 and #2 of this six-issue series each fetch an easy $25-30! Why? Because people are dying to know what happens after the movies! Just out are **Dark Horse Comics** #7-9, each with a meager estimated run of less than 100,000, which feature a three-part **Tales of the Jedi** story. Readers will surely want these back-issues when Dark Horse comes out with

"Published only a couple years ago with a mere $2.95 cover price, #1 and #2 of this six-issue series each fetch an easy $25-30!"

In contrast, Star Wars collectibles gain value because of what happened yesterday (the movies), not because of what's hot this second. An old Star Trek comic with Lenard Nimoy on the cover gains value because people miss those old episodes, not because Spock is hot at the moment. This makes Star Wars and Star Trek collectibles almost risk-free. No matter what, interest in Star Wars and Star Trek will not fold, even if they stop playing the movies and episodes on TV.

That's why we're picking **Star Trek: Deep Space Nine** #1. No, we don't expect this book to shoot up like **Spawn** #4 did. We understand that this is not a hot book. However, we feel confident that it should gain value steadily, slowly, but substantially over time. Check out these back issue values: **Star Trek** #1 (1967 Gold Key), $325; **Star Trek** #1 (1989 DC), $7.50; **Star Trek: The Next Generation** (1989 DC), $9.00.

their . . . (drum roll please) . . . **Tales of the Jedi** limited series! In fact, Dark Horse will be giving this second Star Wars mini-series a real heave-ho promotional push which will include the cover to **Advance Comics** #58. While not "hot" books, **Dark Horse Comics** #7-9 have strong investment potential. (Add the fact that #8-9 also have "X" from **Comics' Greatest World**, Top Picks of the Month from last issue, and you've got some real winners here!)

Malibu Artwork TM & © 1993 Malibu Comics Entertainment
Star Trek®: Deep Space Nine TM Copyright © Paramount Pictures

MALIBU: GOLDEN NUGGETS IN THE 50¢ BOX

Almost all of our advisors universally agree on the Ultraverse. They tell us that they didn't order it too heavily and that customers didn't ask about it very much before it came out. This creates a distinct possibility: The books will be underprinted and they'll be a fantastic sleeper!

At this point it's a coin toss to us, but we've got to admit that Malibu is doing a fine job of marketing the Ultraverse. Aside from promoting the Ultraverse very heavily, they've kicked off an Ultraverse television commercial campaign. According to Malibu, the commercials are appearing on MTV, the Cartoon Channel, Nickelodian, the SCI-FI channel, and USA. Darren Doane, Director of Malibu Films, said, "We've put together very modern, hip, fast-paced, MTV style commercials." To top it off, **Ultraverse** #0 (you send in coupons for it) will have a cover by Jim Lee. According to Ultraverse Editor Hank Kanalz, "It's not just a fluff piece . . . **Ultraverse** #0 has information about the characters and their lives before their first issues."

Even with all this current promotion behind the Ultraverse, Malibu is already gearing up for their next big event — **Genesis!** From the investor's perspective, back-issues that tie into Genesis are a good bet.

What's Genesis? No, no, we're not talking about a Star Trek movie. We're talking about Malibu's upcoming monumental crossover between **Dinosaurs for Hire, Ex-Mutants,** and **The Protectors.** Before the Ultraverse, these were Malibu's most popular titles. Now Malibu will be merging them into one unified, consistant universe for the first time. Elements of the storyline will also affect **The Ferret, Gravestone,** and **Man Of War.**

These Malibu non-Ultraverse comics sell month after month to a loyal fan-following that doesn't expect anything more than good reading. That's right, people buy these comics with the understanding that they will not have any investment value (our favorite is **The Protectors**).

*"Even with all this current promotion behind the Ultraverse, Malibu is already gearing up for their next big event — **Genesis!** "*

This is what gives **Ex-Mutants** #1 (1st app & origin of the new Ex-Mutants team), **Protectors** #1 (1st Protectors), and **Dinosaurs For Hire** (B&W series from Eternity) #1 (1st app) real investment potential. Today you can find these low-print-run books in a dealer's bargain box, but if these reader-tested titles build on their readership, you can bet that their first issues will find their way into the "regular" comic boxes. All of the elements are there for investment potential: Low availability, future higher demand, and good reading. One final note on this — sources at Malibu indicate that a character who is **key to the Genesis crossover** will be introduced in the **Protectors** before the crossover begins. This could be important.

Ultraverse TM & © 1993 Malibu Comics Entertainment, Inc.

ULTRAVERSE™

THE VALIANT PAGE:

AEROSMITH & ARMORINES

This month's Valiant news and inside info comes in the form of a variety of tid-bits . . . First, there's a new title in the works called **Armorines.** The title will feature characters with powered armor and it will tie into **X-O Manowar.**

Dr. Mirage is killed by Master Darque in **The Second Life of Doctor Mirage** #1. In the same issue Dr. Mirage returns as a ghost, in costume. **The Second Life of Dr. Mirage** #1 shows promise thanks to the **Turok** Scare. Many retailers and investors will keep their orders low. This should keep the print run down — **Vantage** expects this #1 could do well. Of course, worse comes to worse, Valiant will probably bail us all out if **Mirage** turns out to be another **Turok.**

Shadowman #19 features an **Aerosmith** appearance. Yes, **Aerosmith.** It won't be just a cameo — the **Aerosmith** rock group will be an essential part of the story. The release of this book coincides with the release of a new **Aerosmith** album which is expected to do very well on the charts. Both **Aerosmith** representatives and Valiant will be trying to get some serious MTV and other music industry coverage for the comic. This could pump up demand for #19.

Harbinger #23 isn't being pushed very hard by Valiant, but it will be an important book. Valiant has announced that events in #23 "could spell the end of the **Harbinger** kids." In fact, these events WILL spell the end of the **Harbinger** kids. In #23 Pete finds out that the other kids are being con-

trolled by Harada and therefore he disbands the team in #24. In #25 Sting and Harada battle big-time and in #26 the Harbinger series will be completely revamped. This will be a be like a #1 with only Faith remaining. The other **Harbinger** characters will indefinately disappear, perhaps forever.

The ramifications of these events are important. After a possible short jump thanks to the new publicity, **Harbinger** 1-22 should slow down as less and less people care about the old team (Remember **New Mutants**?). You may want to trade your multiples of **Harbinger** back issues for other Valiants, just to play safe.

Valiant and Harbinger Logos TM & © 1993 Voyager Communications, Inc.

*"Valiant has announced that events in #23 "could spell the end of the **Harbinger** kids." In fact, these events WILL spell the end of the **Harbinger** kids."*

VANTAGE QUICKIES

KNIGHTFALL: **Knightfall** wraps up with #500 where Azrael wears a wild new Batman costume. Bruce Wayne begins his own adventures in **JLA Task Force** #5. Yes, #500 could go up, especially if DC gets some **Superman** #75-style publicity for the book. However, early **Knightfalls** may be reaching their peak, with the storyline now ending.

IMAGE: Image comes out with a host of new books this month. Exreme Studios is producing a book appropiately named **Extreme** #1, featuring a variety of new characters. At this time there are no plans to spin any of the characters off into their own series. **Gen-X** is a continuous series with art by Jeffery Scott and Alex Garner. Jim Lee is involved in plotting, but he is not scheduled to do any artwork. **Codename Strykeforce** will be a monthly book by Marc Silvestri. Marc's art is strong and the book should do nicely. **Spawn** is still the world's best-selling comic.

DEFIANT: The rumor on the street is that Jim Shooter, the former big cheese at Valiant, had nothing to do with Valiant's success. Our inside sources indicate that this is simply **not true.** Shooter was deeply involved in the creation of Valiant. His new company, Defiant, offers three items this month which all have nice potential thanks to Jim's reputation and expert storytelling ability: 1) **Plasm** #1 kicks off Shooter's first title, with the same talent at the helm that created many of those early Valiants. 2) A trading card series that, when put together, forms **Dark Dominion** #0, which is the prelude to the upcoming **Dark Dominion** series from Defiant. 3) The **Dark Dominion** album, designed to hold the card set, comes with various goodies: front cover, a Magic Viewer that somehow enhances the cards, an additional card available only with the album, and an eight-page comic detailing the origin of a major bad guy. This is not limited to 15,000 as the **Plasm** album was.

COMICS' GREATEST WORLD: Our advisors disagree on quite a bit, but they almost all say the same thing about **CGW.** They predict it will be a winner. Low cover prices ($1.00) on these first books should persuade readers to give **CGW** a try. Dark Horse's high-quality reputation suggests that **CGW** will impress those new readers and keep them for good. At a buck a book, these comics have nowhere to go but up! This month we get four books all centered around **"Steel Harbor,"** a run-down dump of a city: **Barb Wire, The Machine, Wolf Gang, Motor Head.**

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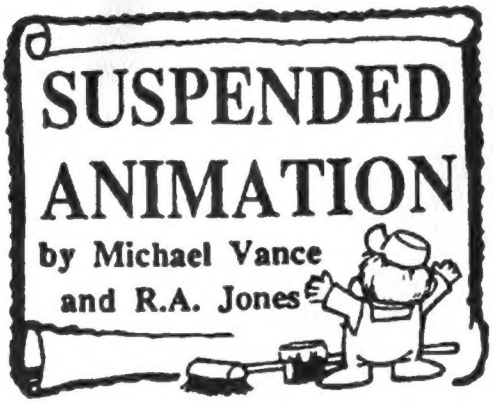

M is for his muscled machismo. R is for the radiance of his gold. T is for his TV shows like "A Team". Put them all together and they spell Mr. T. That rhymes with E that stands for entertainment here in your city.

Mr. T. is the monster of a man wearing a Mohawk haircut, tons of gold necklaces, bracelets and rings, and an upbeat, tough philosophy of life in television reruns. He's back in a new comic book, **Mr. T & the T-Force.**

For devotees of opera, ballet and avant garde poetry who despise simple entertainment, the fat lady has sung. This column is finished. For adventure fans who believe quality is not impossible in entertainment, Mr. T spells great fun.

Granted, this comic book has little originality, penetrating insight or revolutionary message. It's the story of one man's struggle against crime and abuse in the "hood". In its premier issue, Mr. T fights drug abuse, street gangs and violence, child abandonment and unorganized crime. Unlike some "realistic" dark and gritty comics, T doesn't shy away from the underlying causes of these city diseases.

Hurrah for Mr. T.

This comic still has the right stuff. It is what it is, done as well or better than it has ever been done before.

Artist Neal Adams is one of the best. Instantly recognizable, powerfully staged and easily understood, his art elevates this magazine above much of the crud that does aspire to 'art'. In addition, Adams' and Pete Stone's direct, unaffected storytelling is wholly right for Mr. T and adventure.

"This comic still has the right stuff. It is what it is, done as well or better than it has ever been done before."

Adventure seems to belong to this character. It finds him as well as does his simple, direct beliefs: every human has value and is responsible for the consequences of his or her actions.

Responsibly, **Mr. T & The T-Force** comes highly recommended for exactly what it is, without pretense: entertainment.

MR. T THE T-FORCE / published by Now Comics / $1.95

A growing number of people are discovering comics they'll enjoy reading. If you have a question or comments, or can't find a book reviewed, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: 1427 S. Delaware Ave, Tulsa OK 74104

WE SAID IT, IT HAPPENED:

"Top Pick of the Month"
— **Vantage** on **Batman** #497 (Knightfall #11) **before** it came out.

"Top Pick of the Month"
— **Vantage** on the Plasm Album **before** the advance order deadline.

"A hidden golden nugget!"
— **Vantage** on the completely original **Deathmate** comic featuring Solar and Profit that was bagged with **Advance Comics** #55.

GET VANTAGE UP TO THREE WEEKS EARLIER!

Vantage is the ONLY publication that takes comic book investing seriously. Now you can get a special pre-press edition of **Vantage** before each month's advance-order deadline!* Get your comics at a discount in advance and watch your savings make up for the low **Vantage** subscription price! Plus, you'll get our inside back issue tips before anyone else! This is a special RUSH service which we will make available only to a limited number of subscribers. BONUS: Each issue will come with ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT INFO that only subscribers get to see! Dealers and comic stores are welcome!

Cool! I understand that I will get a special pre-press copy of VANTAGE, and that VANTAGE will get my copy to me before the ADVANCE ORDER DEADLINE! Plus I get EXCLUSIVE ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT INFO! I'll make check or M.O. out to VANTAGE, Sub. Dept., 10238 W. National Ave, Suite 166, West Allis, WI 53227.

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❑ Check here if you own or work at a comic shop.

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For changes other than small corrections and minor adjustments, we will keep you updated.